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Correspondence

Dkt. OST-97-2842-9

## CITY OF OGDENSBURG, NEW YORK

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Office of the Mayor  
William D. Nelson, Mayor  
May 10, 2001

(315) 393-1130



Mr. Dennis DeVany  
US Dept. of Transportation  
Office of Essential Air Service  
Air Carrier Fitness Division, X-53  
Room 6401  
400 Seventh Street, S.W.  
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Mr Devany:

I want to express my concern in the possible loss of and stress the importance in maintaining the Essential Air Service status at our North Country Airports. In addition to the EAS status, it is extremely important to focus on the location of the hub for our regional airports. Previously, the Syracuse airport was our hub, but some years past, it was changed to Pittsburgh. This change has resulted in reduced boardings from the Ogdensburg and other North Country Airports. I have had discussions with residents of Ogdensburg, and the common denominator is the Pittsburgh hub and lack of direct connections from our airline to New York City, Boston or other points east.

On April 10, I received a copy of a proposal that was sent to the U.S. Department of Transportation, Office of Essential Air Service from Joel Raymond of Continental Connection. (see attached copy) In Mr. Raymond's submission, he has proposed a new service pattern with Albany becoming our hub. I strongly support this change in hubs and service pattern, and believe it will increase our local boardings and be a "shot in the arm" to help our North Country region remain competitive and maintain adequate air service. Convenient, affordable air travel is essential for the economic growth of the North Country, and is an important factor in maintaining stability of our local industries, educational and health facilities.

Studies have shown that we are losing one-third of our local passengers to Canadian airports. The decrease in numbers continues to put our State and Federal grant eligibility for airport improvements at risk, not to mention the obvious economic impact on our communities.

With your support, I know we can make this proposal a commitment to the future of the North Country.

Very truly yours,

William D. Nelson  
Mayor